

STATE OF MONTANA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
W. F. Cogswell, Secretary.

FOR RELEASE JUNE 23, 1930.

Helena, Montana, June 19, 1930.

MONTANA PUBLIC WATER SUPPLIES. There are 126 public water supplies furnishing water for 112 cities, towns and institutions in the state, from all of which samples are analyzed at regular intervals.

About 50 per cent of all our public water supplies come from wells or springs and 50 per cent from surface streams. Seven of the state institutions are furnished water from supplies owned by the state, the others obtain water from the supplies of the cities in which they are located. The majority of our public water supplies are of satisfactory sanitary quality, but there is evident a constant demand for up to date equipment among the water works operators, and Montana ranks well in conditions and character of her public water supplies.

During the year 1929, the water laboratory, under the direction of the director of the Water and Sewage Division. analyzed 4,627 samples of water, classified as follows:

For sanitary quality:	
Public or city supplies - - - - -	3,650
Privately owned wells, springs, at tourist camps, schools, ranches, etc. - - - - -	723
For mineral content:	
All sources - - - - -	254

This was the largest number of samples analyzed in any one year since this work has been established. There has been a marked increase in samples from privately owned supplies in the past few years, submitted mainly by private citizens. Since the passage of the State Board of Health regulations governing the sanitation of tourist camps, samples of water supplies used in them have increased.

A total of 235 inspections of public and private water supplies, sewage disposal systems, schools, tourist camps, etc., were made in 1929. These inspections consist of a personal visit to the water plant or other structure, with an official directly connected with its operation. Details of construction, design and operation are investigated and sanitary defects, if any, are observed and suggestions made for such corrections as seem necessary.

The State Board of Health has available an emergency liquid chlorine plant for water or sewage disinfection. This is for installation wherever occasion seems to demand it, either to tide over an unusual condition or to care for a situation until a permanent installation can be made.

During the summer months the question of "outdoor sanitation" receives most attention, emphasis being placed then upon the condition of tourist camps, and more recently such recreational camps as those of the Y. M. C. A., Y. W. C. A., Boy Scouts, Sunshine Camps, etc. This work is done in cooperation with the Food and Drug Division, which takes care of the licensing of tourist camps and much of the inspection.

One of the outstanding events of 1929, which called for special work of the water and sewage division, was the flood which visited Wibaux on the morning of June 7. We reached Wibaux on the 10th and remained there, working for the city officials, until the 19th. During this time the city water supply was thoroughly investigated and put into useable condition. Work on the city sewerage system, which was badly damaged, was gotten under way, and buildings were cleaned of debris and of materials which tended to create a nuisance or breeding places for flies. It is gratifying to know that there were no cases of typhoid or other filth-borne diseases following this catastrophe.

W. F. COGSWELL,
Secretary.

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